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Merriam-Webster's Collegiate[®] Dictionary

TENTH EDITION

Merriam-Webster, Incorporated
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plunk \ˈplʌŋk\ *vb* [imit.] *vt* (1805) 1: to pluck or hit so as to produce a quick, hollow, metallic, or harsh sound 2: to set down suddenly : PLUMP ~ *vi* 1: to make a plunking sound 2: to drop abruptly : DIVE 3: to come out in favor of someone or something — used with *for* — **plunk** *n* — **plunk-er** *n*

plunk down *vt* (1891): to drop abruptly; settle into position ~ *vt* 1 *a*: to put down usu. firmly or abruptly *plunked* the money down on the counter *b*: to settle (oneself) into position *plunked* himself down on the bench 2: to pay out

plu-per-fect \plū-ˈpər-fikt\ *adj* [ME *pluperfyt*, modif. of LL *pluperfectus*, lit., more than perfect] (15c) 1: PAST PERFECT 2: utterly perfect or complete — **pluperfect** *n*

plu-ral \ˈplūr-əl\ *adj* [ME, fr. MF & L; MF *plural*, fr. L *pluralis*, fr. *plur-*, *plus* more — more at PLUS] (14c) 1: of, relating to, or constituting a class of grammatical forms usu. used to denote more than one or in some languages more than two 2: relating to, consisting of, or containing more than one or more than one kind or class (a ~ society) — **plural** *n* — **plu-ral-ly** \-ə-lē\ *adv*

plu-ral-ism \plūr-ə-ˈlī-zəm\ *n* (1818) 1: the holding of two or more offices or positions (as benefices) at the same time 2: the quality or state of being plural 3 *a*: a theory that there are more than one or more than two kinds of ultimate reality *b*: a theory that reality is composed of a plurality of entities 4 *a*: a state of society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious, or social groups maintain an autonomous participation in and development of their traditional culture or special interest within the confines of a common civilization *b*: a concept, doctrine, or policy advocating this state — **plu-ral-ist** \-līst\ *adj* or *n* — **plu-ral-is-tic** \plūr-ə-ˈlīs-tik\ *adj* — **plu-ral-is-ti-cal-ly** \-tī-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*

plu-ral-ity \plū-ˈrā-lə-tē\ *n*, *pl* -ties (14c) 1 *a*: the state of being plural *b*: the state of being numerous *c*: a large number or quantity 2: PLURALISM 1; also: a benefice held by pluralism 3 *a*: a number greater than another *b*: an excess of votes over those cast for an opposing candidate *c*: a number of votes cast for a candidate in a contest of more than two candidates that is greater than the number cast for any other candidate but not more than half the total votes cast

plu-ral-ize \plūr-ə-ˈlīz\ *vt* -ized; -iz-ing (1803): to make plural or express in the plural form — **plu-ral-i-za-tion** \plūr-ə-ˈlī-zā-shən\ *n*

plu-rip-o-tent \plū-ˈrī-pə-tənt\ *adj* [L *plur-*, *plus* more + E *potent*] (1916): not fixed as to developmental potentialities; having developmental plasticity (~ stem cell)

plus \ˈplʌs\ *adj* [L, adv., more, fr. neut. of *plur-*, *plus*, *adj.*; akin to Gk *pleion* more, L *plenus* full — more at FULL] (1579) 1: algebraically positive 2: having, receiving, or being in addition to what is anticipated 3 *a*: falling high in a specified range (a grade of C ~) *b*: greater than that specified *c*: possessing a specified quality to a high degree 4: electrically positive 5: relating to or being a particular one of the two mating types that are required for successful fertilization in sexual reproduction in some lower plants (as a fungus)

plus *n*, *pl* **plus-es** \ˈplʌ-səz\ also **plus-ees** (1654) 1: PLUS SIGN 2: an added quantity 3: a positive factor or quality 4: SURPLUS

plus prep (1668) 1: increased by: with the addition of (four ~ five) (principal ~ interest) 2: BESIDES — used chiefly in speech and casual writing (~ all this, as a sedative it has no equal — Groucho Marx)

plus conj (ca. 1950) 1: AND (the Smyth Report, ~ an idea and some knowledge of bureaucracy, were all I needed — Pat Frank) (eats alone, a hot beef sandwich ~ a BLT ~ apple pie — Garrison Keillor) 2: in addition to which (it was an achievement. Plus, I wrote the story and the musical score — Jackie Gleason) (it's also pretty on my open shelves, ~ it smells good — Nikki Giovanni)

usage The preposition *plus* has long been used with a meaning equivalent to *and* (as in “two plus two”); it is not, therefore, very surprising that in time people have begun to use it as a conjunction much like *and*. Sense 2 is considered to be an adverb by some commentators. It is used chiefly in speech and in informal writing.

plus fours *n* *pl* (1920): loose sports knickers made four inches longer than ordinary knickers

plush \ˈplʌʃ\ *n* [MF *peluche*] (1594): a fabric with an even pile longer and less dense than velvet pile

plush adj (ca. 1645) 1: relating to, resembling, or made of plush 2: notably luxurious — **plush-ly** *adv* — **plush-ness** *n*

plushy \ˈplʌ-shē\ *adj* **plush-ier**; -est (1611) 1: having the texture of or covered with plush 2: LUXURIOUS, SHOWY — **plush-i-ness** *n*

plus-sage \ˈplʌ-sij\ *n* (1924): an amount over and above another amount

plus sign *n* (ca. 1907): a sign + denoting addition or a positive quantity

Plu-to \ˈplʊ-(t)ō\ *n* [L *Pluton-*, *Pluto*, fr. Gk *Ploutōn*] 1: the Greek god of the underworld — compare DIS 2 [NL]: the planet with the farthest mean distance from the sun — see PLANET table

plu-toc-ra-cy \plū-ˈtā-kṛə-sē\ *n*, *pl* -cies [Gk *ploutokratia*, fr. *ploutos* wealth; akin to Gk *plein* to sail, float — more at FLOW] (1652) 1: government by the wealthy 2: a controlling class of the wealthy — **plu-to-crat** \ˈplū-tə-ˈkrāt\ *n* — **plu-to-crat-ic** \ˈplū-tə-ˈkrā-tik\ *adj* — **plu-to-crat-i-cal-ly** \-tī-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*

plu-ton \ˈplū-tān\ *n* [prob. back-formation fr. *plutonic*] (1936): a typically large body of intrusive igneous rock

plu-to-ni-an \ˈplū-tō-nē-ən\ *adj*, often *cap* (1667): of, relating to, or characteristic of Pluto or the lower world; INFERNAL

plu-ton-ic \ˈplū-tā-nik\ *adj* [L *Pluton-*, *Pluto*] (1833) 1: formed by solidification of magma deep within the earth and crystalline throughout (~ rock) 2 often *cap*: PLUTONIAN

plu-to-ni-um \ˈplū-tō-nē-əm\ *n* [NL, fr. *Pluton-*, *Pluto*, the planet Pluto] (1942): a radioactive metallic element similar chemically to uranium that is formed as the isotope 239 by decay of neptunium and found in minute quantities in pitchblende, that undergoes slow disintegration with the emission of an alpha particle to form uranium 235, and that is fissionable with slow neutrons to yield atomic energy — see ELEMENT table

plu-vi-al \ˈplū-vē-əl\ *adj* [L *pluvialis*, fr. *pluvia* rain, fr. fem. of *pluvius* rainy, fr. *pluere* to rain — more at FLOW] (ca. 1656) 1 *a*: of or relating to rain *b*: characterized by abundant rain 2 of a geologic change; resulting from the action of rain

pluvial *n* (1929): a prolonged period of wet climate

ply \ˈpli\ *vb* **plied**; **ply-ing** [ME *plien*, short for *applier* to *applier*] (14c) 1 *a*: to use or wield diligently (busily ~ing his pen) *b*: to practice or perform diligently (~ a trade) 2: to keep furnishing or supplying something to (*plied* us with liquor) 3 *a*: to keep furnishing or travel regularly over, on, or through (jets ~ing the river) *b*: to go or apply oneself steadily 2: to go or travel regularly

ply *n*, *pl* **plies** \ˈpli\ (1532) 1 *a*: one of several layers (as of cloth) sewn or laminated together *b*: one of the strands in a yarn *c*: one of the veneer sheets forming plywood *d*: a layer of a paper or paperboard 2: INCLINATION, BIAS

ply *vt* **plied**; **ply-ing** [ME *plien* to fold, fr. MF *plier*, fr. L *plicare*, akin to OHG *flehtan* to braid, L *plectere*, Gk *plekein*] (ca. 1909): to braid together (~ two single yarns)

Ply-mouth Rock \ˈpli-məth-ə\ *n* [Plymouth Rock, on which the Pilgrims are supposed to have landed in 1620] (1849): any of an American breed of medium-sized single-combed dual-purpose domestic fowls

plyo-met-rics \ˈpli-ə-ˈme-triks\ *n* *pl* but sing or *pl* in constr [perh. irreg. fr. *plio-* + *-metrics* (as in *isometrics*)] (1981): exercise involving rapid stretching and contracting of muscles (as by jumping and rebounding) to increase muscle power — **plyo-met-ric** \-trik\ *adj*

ply-wood \ˈpli-wʊd\ *n* (1907): a structural material consisting of sheets of wood glued or cemented together with the grains of adjacent layers arranged at right angles or at a wide angle

-pnea or **-pnoea** *n* *comb form* [NL, fr. Gk *-pnoia*, fr. *pnoia*, fr. *pnein* to breathe]: breath: breathing (*hyperpnea*) (*apnoea*)

pneum- or **pneumo-** *comb form* [NL, partly fr. Gk *pneum-* (fr. *pneuma*), (*pneumoconiosis*) 3: respiration (*pneumograph*) 4: pneumonia (*pneumococcus*)

pneu-ma \ˈnū-mə, ˈnyū-ə\ *n* [Gk] (1884): SOUL, SPIRIT

pneumat- or **pneumato-** *comb form* [Gk, fr. *pneumat-*, *pneuma*] 1: air: vapor: gas (*pneumatolytic*) 2: respiration (*pneumatophore*)

pneu-mat-ic \ˈnū-mə-tik, ˈnyū-ə\ *adj* [L *pneumaticus*, fr. Gk *pneumatikos*, fr. *pneumat-*, *pneuma* air, breath, spirit, fr. *pnein* to breathe — more at SNEEZE] (1659) 1: of, relating to, or using gas (as air or wind): moved or worked by air pressure *b* (1): adapted for holding or inflating with compressed air (2): having air-filled cavities 2: of or relating to the *pneuma*: SPIRITUAL 3: having a well-proportioned fem. *adv* — **pneu-mat-ic-ity** \ˈnū-mə-ˈtī-sə-tē, ˈnyū-ə\ *n*

pneu-mat-ol-o-gy \ˈnū-mə-ˈtā-lə-jē, ˈnyū-ə\ *n* [NL *pneumatologia*, fr. Gk *pneumat-*, *pneuma* + NL *-logia* -logy] (1678): the study of spiritual beings or phenomena

pneu-ma-to-lyt-ic \ˈnū-mə-tī-ˈlī-tik, ˈnyū-ə\ (*n*) (yū)-ma\ *adj* [ISV] (1896): formed or forming by hot vapors or superheated liquids under pressure — used esp. of minerals and ores

pneu-mat-o-phore \ˈnū-mə-tə-ˈfōr, ˈnyū-, ˈfōr\ *n* [ISV] (1859) 1: a muscular gas-containing sac that serves as a float on a siphonophore colony 2: a root often functioning as a respiratory organ in a wetland plant

pneu-mo-coc-cus \ˈnū-mə-ˈkō-kəs, ˈnyū-ə\ *n*, *pl* -coc-ci \-ˈkō-kī-sī, -ˈkō-kī, ˈkē\ [NL] (1890): a bacterium (*Streptococcus pneumoniae*) that causes an acute pneumonia involving one or more lobes of the lung — **pneu-mo-coc-cal** \-ˈkō-kəl\ *adj*

pneu-mo-co-ni-o-sis \ˈnū-mō-kō-nē-ˈtō-səs, ˈnyū-ə\ *n*, *pl* -o-ses \-ˈsēz\ [NL, fr. *pneum-* + Gk *konis* dust — more at INCINERATE] (1881): a disease of the lungs caused by the habitual inhalation of irritants (as mineral or metallic particles) — compare BLACK LUNG, SILICOSIS

Pneu-mo-cys-tis ca-ri-nii pneumonia \ˈnū-mə-sis-tōs-kā-ˈrī-nē-jē, ˈnyū-ə\ *n* [NL *Pneumocystis carinii*, species name] (1964): a pneumonia that affects individuals whose immunological defenses have been compromised, that is caused by a microorganism (*Pneumocystis carinii*), and that attacks esp. the interstitial tissue of the lungs with marked thickening of the alveolar septa and alveoli

pneu-mo-graph \ˈnū-mə-graf, ˈnyū-ə\ *n* [ISV] (1878): an instrument for recording thoracic movements or volume change during respiration

pneu-mo-nec-to-my \ˈnū-mə-ˈnek-tə-mē, ˈnyū-ə\ *n*, *pl* -mies [Gk *pneumōn* + ISV *-ectomy*] (ca. 1895): excision of an entire lung or of one or more lobes of a lung

pneu-mo-nia \ˈnū-mō-ni-ə, ˈnyū-ə\ *n* [NL, fr. Gk, fr. *pneumōn* lung, alter. of *pneumōn* — more at PULMONARY] (1603): a disease of the lungs characterized by inflammation and consolidation followed by resolution and caused by infection or irritants

pneu-mon-ic \ˈnū-mā-nik, ˈnyū-ə\ *adj* [NL *pneumonicus*, fr. Gk *pneumōtikos*, fr. *pneumōn*] (1675) 1: of, relating to, or affecting the lungs: PULMONIC, PULMONARY 2: of, relating to, or affected with pneumonia

pneu-mo-ni-tis \ˈnū-mə-ˈnī-tīs, ˈnyū-ə\ *n* [NL, fr. Gk *pneumōn*] (ca. 1834): inflammation of the lungs

pneu-mo-tho-rax \ˈnū-mə-ˈthōr-aks, ˈnyū-, ˈthōr-ə\ *n* [NL] (1821): a condition in which air or other gas is present in the pleural cavity and which occurs spontaneously as a result of disease or injury of lung tissue or puncture of the chest wall or is induced as a therapeutic measure to collapse the lung

poach \ˈpōch\ *vt* [ME *pochen*, fr. MF *pocher*, fr. OF *pochier*, lit., to put into a bag, fr. *poc* bag, pocket, of Gmc origin; akin to OE *pocca* bag] (15c): to cook in simmering liquid

poach *vb* [MF *pocher*, of Gmc origin; akin to ME *poken* to poke] *vi* (1611) 1: to encroach upon esp. for the purpose of taking something 2: to trespass for the purpose of stealing game; also: to take game or fish illegally ~ *vi* 1: to trespass on (a field ~ed too frequently by the amateur — *Times Lit. Supp.*) 2 *a*: to take (game or fish) by illegal methods *b*: to appropriate (something) as one's own

poach-er \ˈpō-cher\ *n* [*poach*] (1614) 1: one that trespasses or steals 2: one who kills or takes wild animals (as game or fish) illegally

poacher *n* [*poach*] (1861) 1: a covered pan containing a plate with depressions or shallow cups in each of which an egg can be cooked over steam rising from boiling water in the bottom of the pan 2: a baking dish in which food (as fish) can be poached

po-boy \ˈpō-bōi\ *var* of POOR BOY

po-chard \ˈpō-cherd\ *n* [origin unknown] (1552): any of numerous rather heavy-bodied diving ducks (esp. genus *Aythya*) with a large head and with feet and legs placed far back under the body